

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR NORTHWEST WISCONSIN COUNTIES

SEPTEMBER 2002



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

## Unemployment rates drop in August

Unemployment rates declined in 29 counties in Wisconsin in August including six of the ten counties in Northwest Wisconsin. Unemployment was unchanged in three counties in the region and only one county reported an increase in unemployment rate. According to labor force estimates released by the Department of Workforce Development the unemployment rate for the entire Northwest Wisconsin region was 4.6 percent in August, down from 4.7 percent in July but higher than 4.3 percent one year earlier.

The Wisconsin unemployment rate in August, seasonally adjusted was 5.2 percent, up from 4.8 percent in July while the national rate declined from 5.9 percent in July to 5.7 percent in August. Both state and national rates were higher than in August 2001. Comparing unemployment rates that are not seasonally adjusted, the northwest region had a lower rate than both the state and nation in August. The Northwest Wisconsin unemployment rate fluctuates broadly from winter to summer, but the lowest rates, generally occurring in September or October, are still to come.

The one county in the region where the unemployment rate increased was Taylor. The unemployment rate there rose from 3.4 to 3.7 percent. Even with the increase, Taylor County had the 10<sup>th</sup> lowest unemployment rate in the state in August a ranking shared with Sawyer County, also with a 3.7 percent unemployment rate. In Sawyer County, however, the rate declined in August from 4.0 percent in July as the influx of tourists created jobs for workers in retail and services industries.

Tourism also helped reduce the unemployment rates in Bayfield and Iron counties. In Bayfield County the rate declined from 4.3 percent in July to 4.2 percent in August, while in Iron County the rate dropped from 5.8 to 5.5 percent.

The unemployment rate in Ashland County was unchanged during the month at 7.1 percent, the 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate in the state. Employment in manufacturing and services in the county remains lower than one year ago. The recently announced closure of Advanced Data Comm will further reduce the number of workers in the services industry and add to the number of unemployed in the county.

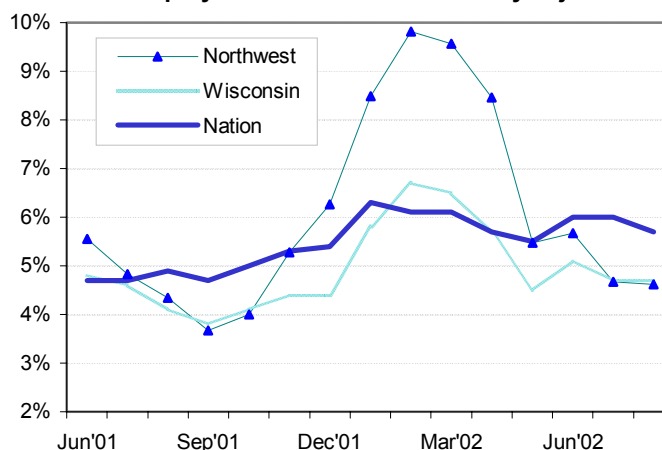
In Price County the unemployment rate dropped from 4.7 percent in July to 4.6 percent in August, and in Rusk County the rate declined from 5.1 to 4.9 percent. In Washburn County, the unemployment rate was unchanged at 4.5 percent.

Burnett and Douglas counties had the greatest reductions in labor force. Both counties also experienced a decline in government jobs as summer youth programs ended in July. Park and recreation programs hire workers in June to direct athletic programs, conduct field trips and research, tutor summer students, and spruce-up landscaping and classrooms. Most of these activities end by mid-August. Students hired in these positions generally do not

look for other work and are no longer in the labor force.

The number of employed residents in Northwest Wisconsin declined from 91,970 to 90,950 in August as the number of unemployed dropped from 4,500 to 4,400. The result was a smaller labor force and a

Unemployment Rates-Not seasonally adjusted



	Jun'01	Jul'01	Aug'01	Jun'02	Jul'02	Aug'02
Northwest	5.6%	4.8%	4.3%	5.7%	4.7%	4.6%
Wisconsin	4.8%	4.6%	4.1%	5.1%	4.7%	4.7%
Nation	4.7%	4.7%	4.9%	6.0%	6.0%	5.7%

lower unemployment rate.

The number of residents filing claims for unemployment insurance benefits also declined from July to August, but the number remains much higher than one year ago. In mid-August residents in Northwest Wisconsin filed 2,272 claims for unemployment benefits.

That was over 1,000 fewer than the 3,343 claims filed in July. The trend downward continued into September. While the recent trend toward fewer claims continued into September, the count remains much higher than just one year ago and even higher than two years ago.

#### August 2002 Estimates

<b>Not seasonally adjusted</b>	Wisconsin	Ashland	Bayfield	Burnett	Douglas	Iron	Price	Rusk	Sawyer	Taylor	Washburn
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	3,089,600	8,600	7,980	7,460	23,190	3,520	6,910	7,180	11,120	10,970	8,430
Employed	2,942,900	7,990	7,640	7,150	22,120	3,330	6,590	6,820	10,700	10,560	8,050
Unemployed	146,800	610	340	310	1,070	190	320	360	410	410	380
Unemployment rate(%)	4.7%	7.1%	4.2%	4.2%	4.6%	5.5%	4.6%	4.9%	3.7%	3.7%	4.5%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	2,850,490	8,950	4,490	4,840	19,030	2,500	6,460	6,100	7,930	9,330	6,390
Construction & Mining	139,780	390	300	300	1,190	400	250	240	450	490	320
Manufacturing	577,170	1,680	210	1,050	1,200	490	2,550	2,330	790	3,280	1,180
Transportation & Pbl.Util.	129,980	200	280	150	2,710	50	130	210	150	560	210
Wholesale Trade	138,590	170	30	30	1,240	60	130	140	140	480	170
Retail Trade	514,440	1,700	910	1,110	3,980	590	1,060	760	2,160	1,510	1,480
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	154,640	360	150	180	510	40	230	130	320	390	210
Services	813,630	2,570	1,170	820	5,590	480	1,240	910	1,970	1,680	1,590
Government	382,280	1,880	1,440	1,210	2,610	380	880	1,390	1,960	960	1,230

#### Change from previous month

<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	-27,000	-30	-50	-210	-430	-50	-90	-20	-120	-120	-10
Employed	-27,000	-40	-40	-200	-360	-30	-80	-10	-90	-150	-10
Unemployed	0	10	-10	-10	-70	-20	-10	-10	-30	30	0
Unemployment rate(%)	0.0%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.2%	-0.3%	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.3%	0.3%	0.0%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	4,310	60	-30	-100	-110	-10	10	100	10	30	70
Construction & Mining	-500	0	-10	-10	10	0	10	10	10	-10	0
Manufacturing	2,170	-20	0	-10	0	10	-10	-30	-10	-50	0
Transportation & Pbl.Util.	840	-10	0	0	-130	0	0	10	-10	10	0
Wholesale Trade	360	0	0	0	-20	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retail Trade	2,880	0	0	50	-40	10	0	10	-10	20	-10
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	-120	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Services	4,770	20	-20	0	180	-10	40	10	0	10	70
Government	-6,090	70	0	-130	-100	-10	-30	90	10	20	10

#### Change from one year ago

<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	65,300	390	280	-240	330	120	-110	-70	1,240	150	60
Employed	43,700	240	230	-190	180	80	-30	-20	1,180	80	50
Unemployed	21,600	160	50	-50	150	40	-80	-50	70	70	10
Unemployment rate(%)	0.6%	1.5%	0.5%	-0.5%	0.6%	1.0%	-1.0%	-0.7%	0.2%	0.5%	0.0%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	10,980	240	240	-180	1,140	10	-50	80	980	230	0
Construction & Mining	2,450	-10	30	20	100	20	20	0	40	-10	20
Manufacturing	-13,200	-120	0	10	-80	10	30	0	0	100	-50
Transportation & Pbl.Util.	-2,240	-10	20	0	160	0	-10	-10	0	30	0
Wholesale Trade	-960	-10	-20	0	50	0	-10	10	0	20	20
Retail Trade	2,090	-10	30	30	140	10	0	10	240	10	20
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	2,720	10	-10	-10	0	0	0	0	10	20	-10
Services	21,790	-130	10	-100	470	-20	0	20	240	100	0
Government	-1,670	290	180	-130	290	0	-100	60	440	-40	-10

\* Includes participants residing in area. \*\* Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

**Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: [WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)**

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